SPECTRUM

1994

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A Note From The SPECTRUM Staff:

This third volume of SPECTRUM contains the prose and poetry of Villa Julie College students and faculty.

Once again, some works fell prey to editorial license.

Editorial Staff:

Renee C. Buck
Carol Sapora
Scott Shrieves
S. Jean Simmons

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KATHY BROWN
RENEE C. BUCK
CAROL SAPORA
SCOTT SHRIEVES
S. JEAN SIMMONS

and our

ADVERTISERS

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WAITING

I have a seventeen year old daughter. I'm convinced that I'm too young to have a seventeen year old daughter but, as it is, I endure all the joys and all the hardships that come as prerequisites for being a parent.

Among all the pleasures of being this child's mother, staying up late until she comes home from a date is not one of them. The evening might begin pleasantly enough as I kiss her cheek (while giving the young man the look of a killer dog over her oh-so-innocent shoulder). I then wave goodbye, sending the lovely couple off on their merry way. Into a car. Into the darkness. Alone. I hate that part. For a good part of the evening I manage to keep myself busy doing things around the house, occasionally glancing at the television in an attempt to pass the time. Fortunately, I have a dog and another, much younger, child--one that does not go out on dates yet (the child, that is, not the dog although I'm sure, given the opportunity, the dog would be open to the idea)--that manage to keep me busy. Until about nine o'clock. That's when the aforementioned smaller child goes to bed. From that point on, everything goes downhill.

With baths over and books read, with the tucking-in part of the evening finished and the dog contently hiding under the covers with the younger child, my anxiety usually begins to take over. It is at this point when the house is quiet and television too moronic to concentrate on (so I turn it off) that my too-active imagination begins to kick in. Full throttle.

I have visions of car accidents on crowded highways or, worse yet, no crowded highways. Instead, quiet, sleepy coves. Makeout coves. Dark makeout coves. With my daughter in the car. With a boy. A boy with raging hormones.

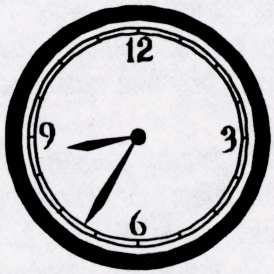
Eventually jolting myself back into reality--I hope--I turn the television on again and pretend to watch. I find the commercials more interesting than the programs. Commercials indicate how far along a particular show is. If you're paying attention, you'll know that when the commercials become more frequent, the program is almost over. If the program is almost over, you'll know what time it is. Time is very important when you're waiting up for a daughter who may be spending her evening in a dark cove.

While counting commercials--and time--the evening inches by and, none too soon, curfew arrives. The sound of the front door is relief beyond description. Every time. As she bounds up the stairs, whispering loudly, "Mom, I'm home!" I breathe a sigh of relief while brilliantly acting as if I was almost asleep--an Academy Award performance on a weekly basis.

While sitting on the edge of my bed, she discusses the details of the evening (or a reasonable facsimile, anyway) in her animated way as I smile in the darkness at her uncensored joy. As she bounces off to bed, I am finally ready to fall off to sleep, content that she is safely at home. As I begin to doze, I convince myself that her report on the evening's activities (which didn't include coves) must be true.

In this semi-slumber state I often think about all the worries that accompany being the parent of a teenager. I am not alone in my concern for the welfare of my child. There are hundreds of parents, just like me, who pace the halls late at night--unbeknownst to their children--waiting for the sound of that door. Every weekend. It comes with the territory. No parent can ever be prepared for, nor are they able to listen when they are forewarned about, the trials and tribulations of raising a child. A teenager in particular. They just learn as they go. Year by year, day by day, minute by minute. Most survive the ordeal and many--at some point--call their own parents, expressing gratitude for all the times they waited and for all the times they cared, not so long ago. Isn't it amazing how becoming the parent of a teenager can make people appreciate their own parents even more?

Cynthia Ross



BROKEN HEARTED

His eyes were hopeful--
"I'm Billy," he said.
His eyes were friendly--
"I'll call you," he said.
His eyes were nervous--
"Hello, sir," he said.
His eyes were solemn--
"I love you," he said.
His eyes were empty--
"I'm leaving," he said.
Now my eyes, once full of dreams, are empty too.

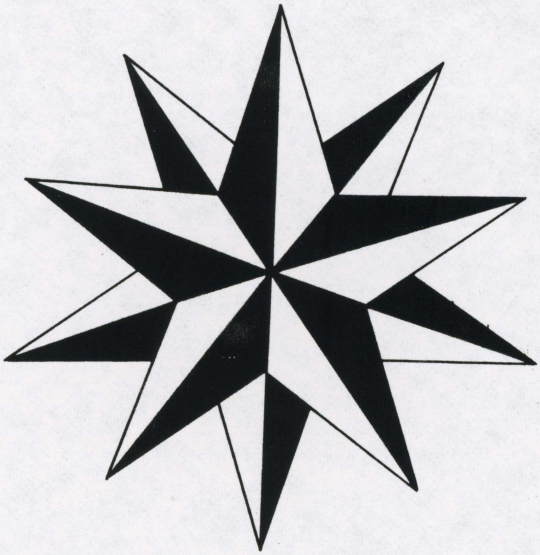
Betsey Delozier

TO ALPHA CENTAURI IN A DAY

I am unconscious
Alive and vital undercurrent
Peace flows over below and through me
I see into the spectrum of forever...
My soul can reach
The highest bough of my tree
And pluck from it the crowning leaf
My soul can reach
The highest cloud in my blue sky
And sit upon it to gaze awhile
For sunrise to see
My soul can reach
The uppermost breath and sheath
Of our little enormous planet Earth
And from it catch some wind
For a journey across the galaxy...
Light speed is sappy flow
The pace of my soul
Light will never know:
I am quick, I am swift
I am the eye, I am the very wind
Of spacetime!
I am movement of grace
I am transcender of space
For all backward thoughts
I am forward deeds:
To the moon, my friend, my Self;
To the rivers and seas that await Mars;
to the orbing disciples of Saturn;
To the stars,
To the stars!
Beyond the reach of the solar winds...

Onward flow and shift the sail!
O, upon the waves of cosmic fabric,
To sail, to sail!
I am swift, I am quick
I am navigator of spacetime:
Onward flow
To Alpha Centauri--
Where my soul-bath and dream-maker
Await me.

Scott Shrieves



AWARENESS

I had the tunes of songs
to make me weep for joy
and lauds of flowers, fragrant, lush
and full to bloom.
The melodies I could have hummed
The buds I could have grown within
But frail and foolish--
--pondering--
I dwelled within a hopeless thing
While music taught the rose to sing.

Diane Jacobs

A TRIP TO PARADISE

Nassau, Bahamas, in my mind, was a sumptuous place full of beautiful sunsets and crystal-like sand. I had waited a very long time to feel that warm sand between my toes. This vacation was promised as a graduation gift, and I was eagerly waiting for this promise to be fulfilled. This trip to the Bahamas was a chance for me to broaden my cultural horizons and to interact with the Bahamian people. (I would be less than honest if I didn't mention the drop dead tan, and the gambling that I was also looking forward to.)

I continued to have expectations for my vacation as I leaned against the ship's railing. The cruise ship I was on seemed overwhelming to me. Excited tourists, with animated expressions, filled the night with sounds of laughter and boisterous singing. The crowd, from young to old, was greedily imbibing from their alcohol-filled glasses. All were looking their best, dressed from head to toe in their formal attire. As we pulled closer to Nassau Island, I stood on the ship's deck and gazed into the bright lights that covered the surface of the island. These lights seemed to mesmerize me, I couldn't take my eyes off the exquisite sight. As I became more absorbed by what I was seeing, I began to wonder if the islanders thought of us as just another load of bothersome tourists. I imagined they were used to intruding ships docking and spilling forth hoards of noisy, fun-loving foreigners longing for a taste of their island.

There was a group of people sitting behind me engaged in a lighthearted conversation about their plans for the week. It seemed they had forgotten about the everyday people on the island. Not once did their plans mention learning more about the island inhabitants. All that they were worried about was escaping from their mundane lives for a week. Steve, my companion on the ship, came over and whispered that it was time to explore the island. I was ready to experience everything the island had to offer.

As we stepped off the ship, I took a quick glance around. Immediately I was confronted by three islanders arguing over who would be the one to give us a ride into town. I was appalled by the sight and smell of these three men. The youngest-looking man was no taller than my shoulders. His greasy hair was unmanaged and hanging wildly in front of his eyes. His breath smelled like the inside of a trash barrel. In fact, from the looks of him, I suspected that was where his meals came from.

The second man was no better. His long, skeletal fingers pointed towards his taxi jeep. "C'mon mon, I give you ride," he said. His clothes hung loosely from his malnourished body. I could no longer stand the smell that was radiating from his clothes.

As I stepped back, I took a closer look at the third man. This man seemed to be sending a message to me through his wrinkled eyes. The message was not positive, for it seemed to be one of angry desperation. I could see the long days of struggling in this man's face. However, I was having trouble feeling sorry for him, for I couldn't get past his outward appearance. Why couldn't I, when seeing his weary eyes and worn shoes, feel some type of compassion?

I've always considered myself to be a person with compassion and the ability to empathize with another. At this moment I wasn't sure what I felt, I just knew that it wasn't comfortable. After collecting myself, I brushed by the three men. A few feet away, I glanced back only to see their looks of dissatisfaction. I commented to Steve that I had never been approached by such uncouth people. I hated this feeling, for I felt so cold and insensitive. However, it seemed that whatever I was feeling deep down inside was much more undesirable than cold and insensitive. So far, I was not having a good time.

I thought about the fact that the taxi drivers in Nassau must make such little money from a trip to town and back, yet that little bit of money was the only thing that helped them barely survive. I thought about their situation during my walk to town, which was long and quiet. The roads which led to town were made of dirt and were not kind to the feet. Still, somehow, I felt that the walk was better than being trapped in one of those awful taxi jeeps. The town seemed peaceful late at night, yet the locals scurried around like there was no end to their day. One local ran up to us and tried to barter a handmade basket. Steve and I just smiled and kept walking past her. I felt a sense of irritation come over me. This irritation came from the realization that even a walk couldn't go uninterrupted on the island of Nassau. The woman was only looking out for herself, and that should have been understandable. I was uncomfortable with this feeling of irritation; it was there and I couldn't fight it. My idea of having a cultural experience was no longer an interest of mine. Once we returned to the ship, which was overflowing with luxury and laughter, I felt as though I were entering a different world. This different world included well groomed people who had only one thing on their minds, and that was fun. There were no people scurrying around trying to find their dinner or someone to buy their belongings. The atmosphere on the ship was what I was

most comfortable with. I wondered why I was so fortunate to be a part of this life, while others were so miserable. I sat and watched everyone having fun. I smiled as the ladies dressed in sequins and men sated with champagne danced by, but I did not feel like smiling.

As I ventured out the next morning, I hoped to avoid the welcoming committee that Steve and I encountered the previous day. I noticed an elderly man a distance away sitting by his taxi. He was leaning up against the stone wall which was next to the ship. The sun was reflecting off the man's taxi and onto his balding head. It seemed as though he was taking a well-needed rest from his daily routine. However, I wondered just how much of a rest that could be scrunched over in a corner in the scorching sun. Taking sore feet into account, there was no question about whether we should walk into town today or take the jeep ride. Steve approached the old, shrunken man and asked for a ride. The local man quickly looked around to see whether he would have to compete with another driver. When he realized that no one was around, his eyes grew large with excitement and he began to pull himself off the ground. His weakened arms began to wobble as he pushed against the paved ground. I noticed an awkward smile come across his face, as if to show us that he still has a small strand of dignity left. I wanted to help him, but I knew that it would take away his pride. I told myself that I felt sorry for this helpless man, but I wasn't doing a good job convincing myself. Steve and I just stood there, for what seemed like forever, looking down on this man. These taxi drivers gave their own sweat and blood to their jobs, and yet that's all they were, taxi drivers.

When the local finally climbed into his jeep, Steve and I reluctantly got into the back. I wasn't quite sure if we should trust this man's driving, but I knew that walking into town in this heat was impossible. The back of the jeep was like a heated tin box. There were no cushions, only a bare metal seat that stretched from one side of the jeep to the other. When the driver went full speed over a pot hole, I slid off the seat and onto the floor. I thought to myself, "Who would issue a license to such a person?" The trip to town had become a nightmare. Every stop sign I clearly noticed, he clearly ignored. In fact, whenever he pulled behind a car that was stopping at stop signs, he would blow his horn furiously. I watched in amazement as his frail body bounced madly around in the front of the jeep. With each bump, he would try frantically to get a better grip on the wheel. As soon as we got to town, I quickly hopped off the jeep. My stomach was in knots from the ride and all I wanted to do was sit down on something stationary.

After sitting on the ground for a few minutes, I decided to get up and look around. The only thing, so far, that had been as I expected was the beach. I have never seen such white, powdery sand. The water was so blue that it hurt my eyes to look at it. I lay down on the warm sand and looked at all the people enjoying themselves. I noticed that tourists were separate from the locals. In fact, when I looked at my position on the beach, I realized that I had unconsciously ventured to the tourist side. I wondered what made me do that. I did know one thing, by looking at the locals on the other side, I wouldn't be as comfortable lying over there. Happy with my location, I pulled out my book and began to read. No sooner did I get to the third line when a local came over and asked, or should I say insisted, on braiding my hair for a dollar a braid. She went on to say that she would braid my entire head. As the local reached for a strand of my hair, I pulled away as if to say, "Don't touch me." I couldn't believe that she wasn't getting the hint. I did not want her touching me, yet her determined fingers kept reaching for my hair. I couldn't take anymore, so I stood up, knocking my book to the ground. The local stared at the book, and I stared at her. I could no longer maintain the polite smile I had painted on my face. "Get away from me," I screamed as I reached for my book. The local could distinctly see the enraged look on my face and she quickly walked away. I could tell that her feeling were hurt, but I felt outraged. "How dare she try to touch me, even after I said no?" I was too upset to enjoy the rest of the day. I wanted to be back on the ship with my own people where I felt safe and comfortable. Even though many of the tourists were greedy and sought their own pleasure, at least they were tolerable to me.

I had never experienced such feelings before. I was actually afraid to try to understand what I was truly feeling. I know I reacted angrily towards the local because I didn't want her touching me, but I also knew that there was probably more to it than that. However, I was not ready to deal with such an emotion. After all, I was supposed to be on vacation. Steve realized that I was ready to leave and, against my will, he got the same old man to drive us back. Because I was anticipating such a horrible ride, I ignored the entire trip back to the ship. As I stepped onto the deck, I once again heard the welcoming sound of laughter. I sat by the pool with my drink and looked at my surroundings. Men were walking around with their polo shirts and tennis rackets. Women were sipping wine and showing off their costly jewelry. There was a general air of affluence and well-being. I somehow didn't feel that I fit into this crowd either, but I certainly was willing to try.

I continued to relax, and I began to feel the secure and pleasant atmosphere which surrounded me. I was glad to be away from the locals and their world. At this point, I would have been happy if I never laid eyes on another local the rest of the trip. I slid further into my chair and took the last sip of my Bacardi Breezer. I was tempted to doze off in the hot sun. As I felt the beads of sweat run down my face, I began to think of that old man sitting by his jeep in the blinding sun. I was curious about what gave him the motivation to get up every morning and to suffer every day. I had seen many people walk by and pity this man. I wondered if this pity is what had taken so much of his dignity. I don't know why, but thinking of this man made me aware that I looked down upon the locals. This feeling was unbearable to me.

I did not expect to find out such sobering facts about myself and others while on vacation. I was thrown off guard and I resented that. I was infuriated at the locals for causing me to have such an undesirable feeling. I realize now that the ships and tourists are the lifeline for the locals. However, I was incapable of even giving them respect. It was incomprehensible to me that I would ever feel this way toward a group of people.

My vacation was supposed to be an escape from the reality of everyday commitments and obligations. However, my trip was actually a confrontation with reality. I always thought that I lived my life objectively, conscious of the world around me. When I was confronted with the people of Nassau, I realized that life was filled with horrors I never even imagined. When faced with the lifestyle forced upon these people, I chose to withdraw into my own life even further.

Now that I look back on my experience, I realize that I had spent all my life denying the fact that there are people out there who are barely surviving. When faced with this situation, I sought to hide, to retreat from the ugliness of what I saw. I was not able to deal with the truth. It is not unusual for people to run away from what is uncomfortable. It is much easier to stay in your own little world where the truth you experience is more comfortable. I avoided any contact with the locals the rest of the week by staying on the ship. On the ship, I felt comfortable, but I was no longer looking at the truth.

Allison Walsh

SEVEN SECONDS IN THE SKY

Give me grave death
If you want to,
But I know you're afraid
Of approaching yourself.

[COUNTDOWN...7]

Try flying once!
On the end of a chain,
On the edge of broken laughter;
In the tail of a comet,
In the bowels of an asteroid.

[TO...6]

If you fall
I will catch you,
But only if you promise
Never to stray.
If you promise
Never to crack the Mirror.
If you promise
Yourself
The same fate you [would] bestow upon me--

[A...5]

Something like
A heavenly enigma
(In my eyes):

[HIGHER...4]

Seven seconds in...

[EXISTENCE...3]

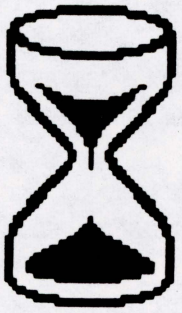
You know, together
We cannot fall from

[IN...2]

...The Sky.

[THE CLOUDS...1]

Scott Shrieves



LESSONS IN THE LEAVES

Life is splendid; the best that it offers is simple and free;
take for example, the autumn tree.

Each leaf unique, telling its own special story;
revealing its secrets through its colors and glory.

Each leaf, like a person, developing character with time;
growing kinder and softer, like a sweet vintage wine.

The wind and the weather set the leaf adrift;
graceful and noble, shedding life...a magnificent gift!

Days are full and time moves fast,
so feel tender moments before they have passed.

Take time to reflect and really admire
the colors of autumn...red, gold and orange fire.

Today in your passing, open your mind and your heart.
Enjoy life and this season before they depart.

Learn a lesson of life that is found in the leaves.
They offer their wisdom, take all that you please.

Seek all that is simple and all that is free.
Whispers of thanks for lovely things that you see.

A moment...a season, a childhood...a laugh
and all other things that too quickly pass.

Kelly Nelson

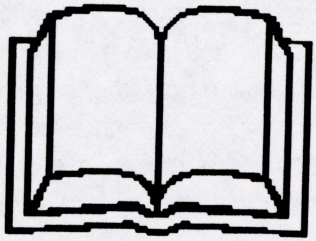
THE GRAND DESIGN

We are pages of an open book.
Every chapter has a purpose;
Each passage has its time.
Some happily ever afters fail,
but we listen to the fairy tales
and live accord the story line.

In the search for thyme and reason
we learn and grow in every season.
But in the book, as in life hereafter,
we learn until the final chapter
to live our lives from line to line,
In truth and love of the grand design.

We're living in an open book.
Every chapter has a purpose;
Each passage has its time,
Characters arranged within the storyline.
We turned another page today,
as we listened to the music play.
Out loud we sang our favorite line,
In truth and love of its grand design.

Maggie Kelly



AND BABY MAKES SEVEN

Every newly married couple endeavors to make their first home perfect. My husband and I were no different, envisioning a picturesque, romanticized, haven of comfort and security straight from the pages of Better Homes & Gardens. There were going to be sunlit days and long, endless nights filled with laughter and love. The daily array of our lives together would revolve around important activities ranging from breakfast in bed to candle lit dinners. However, sometimes dreams do not come true; circumstances come crashing in and the most earnest attempt at perfection becomes a dose of reality.

...

At first, the only blemish on our otherwise flawless situation was that I stole my former roommate's cat. She had made the mistake of declaring her plans to embark upon a carefree life filled with travel and adventure. My immediate reaction was to protect the hapless feline (he was as skinny as a rope when I first met him and, in my opinion, he was affection-starved as well) from an uncertain future. He needed a secure environment where his food was plentiful and his bed was comfortable. I could easily provide such a situation in my new domicile of marital bliss! And so, I stole the cat while she was at work one night. It is probably the most deceitful thing I've done in my life, yet I have no regrets; and the two of us (my husband and I) immediately became three. This may not seem important, but our apartment did not allow pets. Still, it was relatively easy to keep his existence hidden from the conglomerate that called itself our leasing agent. As long as we didn't summon the maintenance men or take him outside, we were fine. Domestic harmony prevailed for several months, until we received another addition to the family. (I know what you're thinking, but it wasn't time for that yet!) Our new arrival was my father.

My parents had separated years ago and my father rented a room in the home of an elderly lady. Then she sold her house to move to Florida, leaving him in sudden need of a place to live. My mother (she and my father were still friends) suggested that he move in with us. We had an extra bedroom and my husband, who travels extensively, enthusiastically offered it to him. His anxieties over leaving me alone at night and my father's immediate need were both resolved in one neat little package. As for me, this

definitely threw a monkey wrench into my mental image of life as a newlywed. Now, there were four of us and my romantic notions were beginning to dwindle along with the time my husband and I found to be alone.

Of course, it wasn't all bad. The three of us who walked on two legs worked a lot of hours at our respective jobs, so we didn't stumble over one another all the time. An additional pair of hands about the place ensured that I never worried about someone forgetting to feed the cat, who, on his own behalf, made a ritual of reminding every one of the chore.

Apart from little inconveniences, such as a broken dishwasher filled with smelly brown water, the cat went completely undetected by the authorities. My husband, however, has little regard for any authority other than his own. He decided to bring home another cat. One of his colleagues had been transferred and could not take her cat along; the poor frightened thing was all alone in the world. I ranted and raved about impending eviction and predicted that we would become homeless and have to live on the street, all the while attempting to divert my gaze from the rumbling white ball of fluff comfortably curled up on the sofa. Now, my little love nest became noticeably crowded as our number rose to five. As my husband, my father, the cats and I began our new life together, I decided that life was still fair to those who accepted the unexpected along with planned events. Oh, by the way; just imagine my delight when, within a few weeks of my husband's bringing her home, we discovered that the roundness of our new arrival wasn't fluff...she was pregnant!

I was immediately panic stricken: didn't cats usually have six or seven kittens in a litter? We simply could not have all of these creatures in a small apartment that did not allow pets. My husband hadn't the vaguest notion why I became so upset and proceeded to tell me not to worry, that everything would be fine. Far be it from me to turn an innocent animal onto the streets; and so, within a month or two the kittens arrived (luckily, there were only three). Oh, I forgot to mention that just about the time the kittens were born, we discovered that I too was going to join our little lady cat in the ranks of motherhood.

The apartment development had a ban on children as well as animals. Our lease was up at the beginning of April and the baby was due at the end of June so we thought that there was plenty of time to find a place to live. Surely there must be dozens of apartments willing to rent to a family that included newlyweds, a father-in-law, three cats and a baby on

the way. In fact, the company that we rented from owned numerous complexes, some that even allowed children--how civilized of them. We informed them of my pregnancy, leaving out the part about the cats. Although we managed to find homes for two of the kittens, one stayed on to raise our permanent family number to six. The company agreed to lease a lovely town house to us. This was an agreeable arrangement except that I would have to continue my life of deception and never be able to have a broken appliance fixed.

Several days later, I received a telephone call inviting me to the main office to fill out some additional paper work. I cheerfully obliged by arriving later that afternoon. An angry middle-aged woman greeted me and asked that I follow her to her desk. To my absolute horror and embarrassment she pulled out a folder that contained various Polaroid snapshots of our cats in the apartment. There were pictures of my frightened cats running from awful camera carrying intruders, the female trying to protect her kitten. I was devastated, partly from being found out and partly from feeling invaded. Because I am a terrible liar who avoids confrontation with strangers at all costs, I did not know what to say. I got out of there like a shot, immediately phoning my husband to tell him that we had no place to live and, of course, that it was all his fault. He again admonished me, saying that everything would be fine and we would find a place when he got back from his current trip.

April was drawing near, as was my panic and the final trimester of my pregnancy. Absolute discomfort and irritability can add to a person's sense of foreboding. Calm and in complete control as usual, my husband researched acceptable housing ads, making the appropriate phone calls. We found one development that was in a good neighborhood and even allowed children. As I listened to his conversation, he asked all the right questions and then began to broach the subject of animals. I began to wave my hands frantically in the air--not a pretty sight when one is as big as an elephant--to stop him from revealing that we had three additional members of our family. It was too late. The question about pets hung in the air; did we have any? He had not, however, made our personal situation clear, and as he witnessed my ungraceful gyrations, he told the woman on the phone about our huge box turtle that he felt he must report as a pet.

To this day, I don't know exactly what the rental agent's reply was; the important thing is, we were saved. Well, we were almost saved. It seemed they would not have any three bedroom apartments available in April; however, they did have a two bedroom and den that would be ready on time. We said that would be acceptable. The rental agent then

informed us that she could not rent a den out as a bedroom. We agreed and told her what she needed to hear; that my father and the baby world share a room. (It was only a little untruth--we would all be sharing the same group of rooms, after all.) She said she would call us back later. As I waited for the phone call, I resigned myself to the fact that we would never again have a place to live. It was the middle of March and time was no longer an asset. The phone call brought good news and relief, but the reason for my relief was itself incredible. This woman on the phone told me that she could rent the apartment to us because the sex of my unborn baby was as yet unknown. It is perfectly legal to rent one bedroom to a grandfather and grandson. However, in the event of a girl, the apartment could not be rented because the grandfather would be sharing a room with a female child. I could hardly believe my ears, but I didn't dare mention the very large den, thinking that at this point it was better to leave well enough alone. Crises over with, thoughts of homelessness could be forever banished as I prepared to enter another, hopefully less traumatic, chapter of my life.

Moving day crept upon us quickly. I was excited about our new home. Forgetting about my distasteful encounter with the previous landlord, our new home promised renewed happiness...complete with a nursery. The policy of this particular apartment complex was to give the new tenants a walk through of the apartment on the morning of the move-in day. I now completely understand the reason for that particular policy. It was the apartment from hell! Since it was by no means a cheap apartment in a shoddy area, I was completely dumfounded by the condition of the unit. The thin and badly worn carpet was a putrid green shag (a conspicuous throw back to the seventies) that looked as is a host of tiny creatures found a home in its threadbare fabric. The washing machine, useless because of its broken innards, was sitting in the middle of the living room floor for no apparent reason. The kitchen appliances were filthy with greasy residue and other more indefinable stains that covered their avocado-colored (ugly green in the simplest terms) surfaces. And the absolute worst offense of all, a roach was crawling across the dining room wall. I had never seen a roach and maintained that it must be a small, fast cricket. My husband patted me on the hand and said that maybe I was right. (He didn't really fool me.)

The moving van was loaded, the lease was signed, and the baby was almost here. We had no choice but to move into that awful place. I was feeling like a failure as a mother before I even became a mother. Images of insecticide canisters and scurrying things clouded my dreams of a beautiful pastel nursery. How could I bring a child into an

environment with bugs? The baby would never be able to crawl on the carpet that had a life of its own and the smell to prove it. I wanted, for the first time in years, my mother! She was no help. All she did was agree that the apartment was a disaster area. Off on yet another trip as soon as the moving van pulled away, my husband (After all of our years together I still have not decided if he is clairvoyant or just extremely lucky, but he has conveniently been away for every domestic crisis we have ever had.) informed me that he was quite confident that I could do wonders with the apartment. That I could make it the ideal home for us and the new baby.

Endless nagging and determined persistence resulted in weekly visits by an exterminator. This was no easy endeavor, considering that the cats were still "illegal" residents that needed to be hidden in the outside storage closet--poor things--every time he came. Every time he finished, I realized that dead roaches are just as nasty as live ones; self-pity soared whenever I had to clean up another battlefield of insect corpses. Pregnancy and I did not get along as the best of companions and as the days grew warmer and I grew fatter, life seemed only to get worse. Restricted to complete bed rest during my last month, I developed a disgusting familiarity with the hideous little intruder's habits, declaring all out war and vowing that I would emerge the victor.

By the time our child was born (fortunately a boy, in case the apartment Gestapo ever decided to check up on his gender), I had successfully banished the roaches from the apartment, but it was months before I could turn on the kitchen light without being prepared to jump, run, or squash. Now we numbered seven in all, and since at least four of us would spend a majority of time on the carpet, I even managed to convince the powers that be that we desperately needed a new one. (Again, our poor cats suffered the indignity of another day of banishment to the outside storage closet, while the installers worked.) My baby would never have to endure roaches or germ infested rugs. Of course, he occupied the same floor territory of three cats whom I taught him to "make nice" to--that means no pulling tails or ears--and who quickly accepted him in return. My mother, however, called daily to tell me that the cats were going to kill the baby, steal his breath, eat his food, eat him! Constantly prepared with horror stories of one kind or another, I think she drove my slightly nuts. Intellectually, I knew the stories were not true, but as a young mother preoccupied with thoughts of SIDS, I roamed the halls nightly, protecting everyone in my house and never forgetting my duty as roach patrol person.

One afternoon I was particularly tired and decided to take a nap of my own when the baby fell asleep. I woke up suddenly with the distinct impression that something was terribly wrong. As I ran into the baby's room (the den that wasn't supposed to be his bedroom), I saw his crib "floating" into the center of the room. The neighbors hot water heater had burst, spilling gallons of water onto the building's concrete foundation, flooding under the fire wall and into our apartment. Frantically dialing the rental office with one hand, I grabbed my son with the other and shrieked at the woman who answered the phone that my baby could have drowned, not to mention what was happening to my brand new carpet! She made immediate arrangements to send my father, my baby and me to a nearby Holiday Inn while maintenance men put small portable fans under the carpet (I didn't have time to hide the cats, but no one ever said anything). The room looked like an eerie scene from some Twilight Zone episode. My husband--as you've probably already guessed--was out of town on business. He returned home that night to the dismaying sight of an empty and darkened apartment filled with vague mounds of billowing carpet that surged in surreal waves for no apparent reason. It took several days before the apartment dried out and we could all return home. Our cats, unimpressed with the hotel (whose staff never realized they were there), inspected every inch on the "newly" laid new carpet before I placed my son's diapered bottom on it.

Life continued in a somewhat normal fashion before the next calamity struck. I was folding laundry on the dining room table as the baby napped. The cats started acting in a peculiar manner (they know things), so I decided to investigate. It took only seconds before I saw a huge dark cloud of flying ants swarming beneath the living room ceiling. I had never seen anything like it in my entire life. They seemed to be everywhere, a living, silent cloud that spread ominously through the apartment as I watched. As they flew into the dining room, the cats all jumped on the table full of clean laundry, stood on their hind legs, and swatted at the termites in an attempt to catch them--I wondered if they would have known what to do with them if they did catch any.

Alarmed, I grabbed my son and whisked him up the stairs to my neighbor's apartment, telling her that she had to help me get my cats away from the termites! (I don't know why the cats couldn't stay in the house with the bugs but it made perfect sense at the time.) She has three boys of her own who were running up and down the hallways as I demanded that we bring the litter box and cat food as well. We called the exterminator from her apartment. Upon arriving, he remembered me from my panic over the roaches and

found the entire situation amusing. With a smile etched keenly on his face, he informed me that during the process I could experience a post-swarm. It never happened, and I still don't know if he was joking or not. And so, after being rescued from the man-eating termites (a process that took weeks to complete), we settled into what had become our natural rhythm, which is to say, waiting for the next thunder bolt to strike. That may sound like a metaphor, but in our home those had a way a becoming very solid. You never knew just what to expect next.

...

We lived in that apartment for four years; and despite my plunge into a reality filled with everything from landlords to natural disasters, it ended up being a wonderful time in my life. My father still lives with us, as well as all three cats and, of course, our son. The neighbor who helped me with the termites is still one of my best friends. (Women stuck in the house with preschoolers bond like college roommates...or prison inmates, perhaps.) Although our emotionally draining beginnings rudely awoke me to life's unpredictable and often capricious nature, I have warm feelings when I think about our time spent in that apartment. It amazes me that I can now recall this episode with humor because I really was anxiety-ridden then. Yet, I have come to realize that the home the seven of us made there overshadowed insect infestations and man-made floods. As the years fade into memories, joyful times become paramount while disappointments simply serve to enhance them. The crazy reality we experienced provided more richness and joy to my life than any romantic dream ever could. These memories that bring a smile to my lips are not filled with disappointments, they are experiences that made my life gratifying and fulfilling. I may finally understand something of the balance between what we dream of and the difficulties of realizing those dreams. The reality that surfaces is often more desirable if we allow the passage of time to soften the blow truth brings to our preconceived notions.

Paula Crothers

MEMORIES OF LEONARD, SR.

Pepto Bismol pink paint on a house at the top of a hill.
Tomato plants heavy with ripened tomatoes.
Shelves of canned peaches stacked to the sky.
Egg custard with nutmeg.
Silver dollar pancakes.
"Dead" peas.
This is how I remember him.
He isn't here anymore--
I've forgotten the sound of his voice;
His face I know only from photographs.
Details are blurred and faded,
But I will never forget the man.

Betsey Delozier

LORD OF THE EYES

Labyrinths fill my mind
A treasure there to find ?

What is it that I seek
What am I but the meek ?

I am feeling my way
Through my thoughts today ...

I know my prize:
A pair of eyes !

Such a fool I must have been
Thinking 'twas night I dwelled in

When all I required
Was my sense...
...that [I thought] expired!

Scott Shrieves

A MAN AND HIS MONEY

Time gets the best of you,
Eats away the rest of you.
Can't hold the time you make,
Waiting for the double-take.
Take the money, take the lies.
Look at them through drunken eyes.
Time seems to slip away.
Knowing it's the price you pay,
For holding on to golden calf,
Sorry there's no other half.

Time seems to slip away.
Time just slips away.
Time slips into another day.
Time just slips away.
Time spent trying to buy back time,
You find is time slipped away.

I'm so rich, it's all that matters
So glad I'm not like those bastards.
Feeling sorry for the junkie,
Holding on his funky monkey.
Money hungry, yes I am.
It's my way to feel a man.
There's no way to stop me now,
No time left to tell you how.

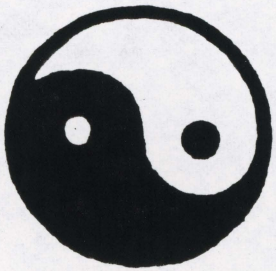
Made my cap at thrity-five,
Damn it's good to be alive.
I've got money, it's no joke.
My family hates me, they're all broke.
Money hungry, yes I am,

The only way to be a man.
Should have seen me years ago,
I was feeling pretty low.
Had no money, had no women.
Look at that boy, it's a given.

Time seems to slip away.
Time just slips away.
Time slips into another day.
Time just slips away.
Timė spent trying to buy back time,
You find is time slipped away.

How I got here, I don't know,
But I find myself alone.
In the race for pot of gold
I found myself slow and old.
It's no good, I've got say,
To have spent my life away.
I've got money, but got no time
To make up for what's gone behind.

Maggie Kelly



&

and the sky is falling
and the day is gray
and
and I hear the dead
are calling
and silence is all they say
or something like sleep
like my blood
like my life
like my thoughts
maybe maybe maybe
I'll just pace the room while the candle flickers
and I stare at the walls
and they melt away
and I scream [dream] the Halls
and die is all I say
so maybe I'm sane
so maybe I'm not
like who cares anyway
like I even care to say [stay]
maybe I'm alive
maybe I'm not
and who knows
and who cares
and WHY?
and...

Seth de Mort

It waits
Like a shard of broken glass beneath murky waters
It waits
Dormant not dead
Hibernating through the calm
Awakening in turmoil
Emerging from the deepest recesses of the mind
Feeding on your fear
It springs to the helm
Destroying what took so long to assemble
It waits

Stephen Thomas

VIRTUAL HANDS [RISE OF A VIRTUAL KING]

I.
Moving like a lantern strobe
Across my flexing mind,
Your virtual hand dares to probe
A landscape of an alien kind.

There I am--the lights
That haunt family and friends,
There I am--the sights
You'll see when this world ends.

I thrive as you decay,
So lost in my mind.
You thought you'd merely play,
But you've been stricken blind!

II.
Stretching out as far
As the aided eye can see,
Lie the contents of a dying star
And graphic fragments of me.

Your hands are not your own,
Neither is your brain.
I've reaped what you've sown,
Now you lie there slain!

III.
I am ruler of a virtual land;
I am the eye, I am the hand.

Scott Shrieves

Best Wishes to

Villa Julie College

Student Pugwash USA

and

the Class of 1994

Carolyn and Rose

Congratulations to the

Graduating Class of 1994

from the Villa Julie College

Library Staff!

WHILE YOU MINE THE POETRY
DEEP IN YOUR SOUL
WE LEARN HOW BUSINESSES
GO INTO THE HOLE

JUST THE RIGHT WORD
LIKE A ROSE FROM A BUNCH
YOU CHOOSE WITH SUCH ART
WHILE THE NUMBERS WE CRUNCH

SO ITS TRUE WE SUPPOSE
WHEN ALL'S SAID AND DONE
THERE ARE THE DARNDEST DIFFERENCES
IN HOW PEOPLE HAVE THEIR FUN

THE COMPUTER ACCOUNTING DIVISION

"Learn to Think in a New Way."

--Albert Einstein
Pugwash Manifesto, 1955

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STUDENT PUGWASH USA

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Chris Tomback
Jo Ellen Turner
Jerry Van Aken
Jenny White

Some thoughts from Shakespeare's
THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

The weakest king of fruit
Drops earliest to the ground.
IV, i, 115

I will buy with you, sell with you, talk
with you, walk with you...
I, iii, 34

All that glistens is not gold
Often have you heard that told
II, vii, 65

Be strong. Continue to draw and write
and don't let the business world lure you
away from your creativity.

--The Business Administration Division

Best Wishes

to the

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***

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